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ABSTRACT

The State Employment Initiatives for Youth (SEIY) demonstration was designed to test a model approach to state-level planning and local programming for youth at risk of chronic unemployment using existing public resources. As an initial step, the demonstration required that the governor in each of three participating states--Massachusetts, South Carolina, and Oregon--appoint a Youth Coordinating Council. States also provided initial funding. The councils were asked to take two initial planning steps: to complete a needs assessment to identify strengths and deficiencies in the youth-serving system and to develop a comprehensive strategy for making improvements in youth services through a process that included establishing priorities for local programs. The SEIY approach increased the priority and degree of attention given at-risk youth by participating state agencies, produced improvement in state-level interagency collaboration on issues of service to at-risk youth, increased the range of services available to at-risk youth, and increased collaboration at the local level. The demonstration did not effectively promote the needs of at-risk youth as a priority for governors and state legislatures. Institutionalization of the Youth Coordinating Council process was proceeding in Oregon and Massachusetts. (YLB)

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State Employment Initiatives: An Assessment For Youth of the Demonstration

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Finally, the real work of this demonstration can be credited to the participating states and particularly to the dedicated efforts of Youth Coordinating Council members. We are especially grateful to Oregon County Commissioner, Barbara Ross and South Carolina State Representative, Crosby Lewis, Council Chairpersons, and to John Pendergrass and Hayes Mizell, State Coordinators, for their considerable efforts in the face of numerous obstacles and barriers. We also wish to thank Cay Stratton, Associate Secretary in the Massachusetts Office of Economic Affairs for her assistance in arranging evaluation efforts in the state.

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FOREWORD

The State Employment Initiatives for Youth (SEIY) demonstration was envisioned as a modest effort to mitigate a major problem: the paucity and fragmentation of services for disadvantaged youth. The demonstration's focus was on states because of their increasing responsibility for developing and administering programs to serve the disadvantaged. While the ultimate goals of SEIY are similar to those of many other "coordination" initiatives, the design of the program differs. Neither a blueprint for structural change nor a model programmatic initiative, the SEIY mechanism aims instead to make the existing system work more effectively.

Emphasizing its adaptability in a variety of individual state environments, the demonstration design provides incentives for state agencies and communities to make better use of available funding, resources and programs. In a decade when funding for major new initiatives in the human services field is unlikely, we think this approach both timely and workable and are pleased to present our findings here.

Two caveats should be kept in mind in reviewing the SEIY results. The first is the limited timeframe of the demonstration. The SEIY approach is incremental in nature and long-term in effect; while some indications of success are apparent, the larger change in perspective this effort seeks to promote is one that will likely extend much beyond the three-year point marked by this report. A second caution concerns scale. SEIY was conceived and delivered as a limited demonstration -- restricted in size, circumscribed in scope and modest in funding. It's been tried in only three states, each distinctive in outlook and character, and sharing only some of the characteristics of each of the other 47.

Given these limitations, it would be unrealistic to expect the demonstration to have occasioned fundamental restructuring in the provision of comprehensive services, and by and large this has not so far occurred. SEIY has, however, been relatively successful in meeting the more modest goal of developing a critical mass of people, plans and programs necessary to further change.

Especially notable have been achievements in Oregon where a significant proposal to improve services for at-risk youth can be credited to some degree to the demonstration initiative. Since the time this report was written, the Departments of Human Resources and Education have conceived a joint initiative -- for which funding of $25 million will be sought from the legislature -- aimed at providing more comprehensive services to a wide range of disadvantaged youth. Based in part on the example of demonstration-initiated programs, the departments have recommended

that the SEIY Coordinating Council play a major role in overseeing the new joint initiative and helping to develop a coordinated planning process to be implemented at the local level. Among the new services proposed are:

- Early in-school identification of at-risk youth and development of plans to meet their needs,
- Educational programs for youth in custody,
- Additional mental health services to children,
- Prenatal care to teen mothers, and
- Alcohol and drug services for AFDC families.

Although it would be premature to say that the demonstration "worked" and misleading to suggest that these Oregon results are necessarily replicable in other states, we believe that what has been accomplished is significant. In the absence of notable gubernatorial or legislative support, and with relatively little additional funding, the SEIY Youth Coordinating Council in Oregon has been a factor in promoting clear improvements in both the accessibility and character of programming available to disadvantaged youth.

In the long-term effort to create more efficient and more equitable means for states to serve their youthful clients, SEIY may well be a first step worthy of consideration.

Michael A. Bailin
President

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State Employment Initiatives for Youth (SEIY) demonstration was designed to test a model approach to state-level planning and local programming for youth at risk of chronic unemployment using existing public resources. The SEIY approach calls for the appointment of a state-level council, which oversees conduct of a statewide assessment of youth needs; development of a comprehensive youth service strategy; examination of existing agency policies and resource use for potential coordination; and identification of exemplary programs for expanded local implementation. A modest amount of funds from each of several participating state agencies is allocated for initial use by the council to expand, initiate and/or replicate these exemplary programs. The approach was tested during a three-year demonstration in the states of Massachusetts, South Carolina and Oregon.

SEIY attempts to provide a structure within which state governments can more effectively carry out their role in establishing policies and administering funds for at-risk populations. State governments are typically not organized around the needs of specific at-risk groups; providing services and setting policies for disadvantaged youth, in particular, are the responsibilities of numerous separate agencies. The SEIY approach was intended to offer a stimulus and a forum for those agencies to coordinate their policies and programs so that the comprehensive strategies required for at-risk youth could be established in a systematic and systemic manner.

As an initial step, the demonstration required that the governor appoint a Youth Coordinating Council. Members included senior officials from the agencies serving disadvantaged youth, key local leaders, and representatives of the private sector. A council chairperson and a lead agency were designated at the same time. The lead agency was responsible for administrative and financial management of the council, staffed by a senior-level State Youth Coordinator.

The councils were asked to take two initial planning steps: first, to complete a needs assessment to identify strengths and deficiencies in the youth-serving system; and second, to develop a comprehensive strategy for making improvements in youth services through a process that included establishing priorities for local programs. The states in the SEIY demonstration agreed to allocate $400,000 to $500,000 for each of two years to fund local programs. To qualify for receipt of council funds, localities were required to mirror coordination efforts at the state level, to respond to council priorities, and to provide matching local funds.

Demonstration of the SEIY model approach was conducted from 1983 through March 1986 with support from a consortium of private foundations. They included the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, Aetna Life and Casualty Foundation, The Ford Foundation, M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust, Southern Education Foundation, and the Oregon Department of Revenue. Funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services was primarily directed to the support of innovative programs at the local level. Evaluation of the SEIY demonstration was undertaken during its third year and completed shortly after the demonstration concluded March 31, 1986.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The SEIY approach made it possible for the demonstration states to begin building a more rational system for serving high-risk youth. Measuring the model's viability in terms of the demonstration's major goals, the evaluation reached the following conclusions:

- **The SEIY approach increased the priority and degree of attention accorded to at-risk youth by participating state agencies.** In Oregon, for example, the SEIY approach helped bring about demonstrable policy changes in the Departments of Education and Human Resources, and promoted greater involvement of juvenile justice agencies.

- **The demonstration was not able to effectively promote the needs of at-risk youth as a priority for governors and state legislatures.** Only in South Carolina (whose Youth Council's chairperson is a prominent legislator) was there any evidence of increased legislative attention to the issue. In all three states, competing interests and limited resources made gubernatorial attention to other issues more compelling.

- **The SEIY approach produced improvement in state-level inter-agency collaboration on issues of service to at-risk youth.** In Oregon and Massachusetts, there has been a notable increase in inter-agency contact, including the sharing of information, plans and resources.

- **SEIY-coordinated programming increased both the range of services available to at-risk youth and the level of programming targeted to specific subgroups of the at-risk population.** In all three states, the comprehensiveness of youth programming was greater in SEIY programs than in most traditional single-agency programs; in

addition, the level of programming targeted at special-needs groups (such as teen parents) received special focus.

- **Collaboration at the local level increased substantially in all three states**, resulting in new linkages between agencies, expansion of the youth-serving network and, in some cases, shared planning and administration of local youth programming.

- **Institutionalization of the Youth Coordinating Council process is proceeding in Oregon and Massachusetts.** The council in Massachusetts has become a subcommittee of the State Job Training Coordinating Council, with responsibility for reviewing expenditure of JTPA 8% funds; five council members sit on the SJTCC itself.

  In Oregon, the council continues as a free-standing entity, and is increasingly viewed within the state as a mechanism to initiate, monitor and evaluate youth programming. The Council has been allocated an additional $800,000 for two years from state JTPA funds, and $90,000 in vocational education funds to support local projects, the state coordinator and the council itself. One SDA asked the council to distribute $158,000 of its funds this year. And the SJTCC has provided the council $545,000 in unspent 8% funds for disadvantaged youth.

  In South Carolina, the coordinator's position has been re-funded for FY 1987, but the continued existence of the Youth Council has not been clearly resolved.

In short, the creation of a low-cost, well-structured collaborative process with modest initial support not only took hold for the term of the demonstration, but has been viewed as useful enough to continue in two of the three states. Continuation in the third state has not yet been determined. Given the critical nature of the substantive problems being addressed -- and nationwide concern that neither educational, social service, employment and training, or other youth-serving agencies can alone effectively deal with at-risk youth -- SEIY represents a potentially useful approach for consideration by other states.

REPLICATION LESSONS

1. <u>The demonstration design can be adapted to individual state environments</u>. While the demonstration sample is small -- and the results are not necessarily applicable to all states

-- preliminary results show a significant level of achievement with likely potential for replication.

Findings in Oregon -- a state with limited resources and a relatively small service delivery system -- suggest that SEIY may be a means to generate new interest and funding for at-risk youth in a stable or contracting programming environment.

The contrasting experience in Massachusetts -- where the service delivery system is large, diffuse and expanding -- suggests that SEIY may also be effective as a means to simplify and coordinate policy initiatives in a disparate and complex environment.

2. Several features and uses of the SEIY approach seemed especially crucial to its effectiveness.

   - The Youth Coordinating Council was a major instrument for promoting coordination, enabling disparate agencies to jointly focus attention and interest on broader needs of at-risk youth. It served well as a clearinghouse for information and resources relating to at-risk youth. At critical junctures it also acted as an advocate for youth initiatives within individual agencies, although it was less effective in this role in the wider state arena. While the council was effective in advancing a variety of collaborative efforts between agencies, it did not play, nor could it play, a major role in the ongoing planning, budgeting and staffing of member agencies.

   - Based on experience in Oregon and Massachusetts, the Youth Coordinating Council appears to be most effective when composed of agency staff below the highest levels. Mid-level staff tended to be more familiar with agency operations and personnel, had contacts and credibility at both the administrative and line levels, had more time to meet, and were better able to focus on specific policy and service delivery issues. Agency heads were most useful when called in only on key budget or programmatic issues.

   - Initial gubernatorial approval and assignment of a formal mandate to the council were useful to provide legitimacy and initial impetus to agency participation in a collaborative process. Gubernatorial involvement thereafter was not a factor in any of the three states.

- o The needs assessment provided demonstration states with a quick survey of needs and a starting point for council efforts. It insured some objectivity in a council's early activities. In addition, the needs assessment process served as a vehicle for directing attention to at-risk youth.

- o Having a full-time youth coordinator contributed significantly to SEIY activity in all three states. The coordinator typically functioned in both the designated role as staff to the council, and in an ad hoc capacity as advocate for youth and needed resources.

- o A competitive and targeted RFP process for local exemplary programs worked well in generating local interest in the SEIY process and goals. The RFP process generated a diversity of local program models -- many of which had not been foreseen by state planners. It also promoted considerable interest in the SEIY collaborative process at the local level, and assured local agencies and government officials that SEIY program money would be utilized in a relatively impartial manner, and not simply divided among state agency interests or favorite projects.

3. The involvement of a facilitating agency outside of state government was key to moving the collaborative process through its initial stages and providing information about proven youth strategies. An outside facilitator has a neutral status for convening competing agencies, the ability to serve as a catalyst, and the capacity to bring a wider scope of information and perspective to the development of youth programs. Officials in all three states indicate that SEIY activities could not have occurred at the level they did without outside intervention. Technical assistance efforts by an outside agency beyond demonstration start-up, however, were less effective than during initiation. A designated facilitator should act primarily to disseminate results and foster communication among states once the model process is in place and working.

4. Where schools play a strong role in local project efforts, the process seems to generate greater local interest.

   Oregon's pilot use of schools as centers for screening, referral and service for at-risk youth is an innovation with strong potential for expanding services to a wide population. Schools are the logical and effective locus for early

contact with disadvantaged youth. Their involvement promoted a much greater interest in preventive programming, and helped gain the support of local leaders in the private and public sectors.

The State Employment Initiatives for Youth demonstration was set up to encourage more coordinated use of different agencies' resources for at-risk youth on a regular and systemic basis. The approach was structural and procedural -- in contrast to the usual demonstration approach of testing a specific program model. Though the demonstration scope was modest, including only three states, the results have been favorable enough to warrant the conclusion that an approach similar to the SEIY model process may be of value in many states. The use of modest outside funds and a facilitating agency as catalysts were important in the SEIY demonstration, and will probably be required on a short-term basis for extension of the process to other states.

Given the national concern over at-risk youth and the increased authority of states to deal with social concerns, a structured state-level process that promotes better agency coordination of resources and more comprehensive programming may be a promising strategy for improving services for at-risk youth in the long term.

I. INTRODUCTION

The State Employment Initiatives for Youth (SEIY) demonstration was designed to test a model approach for coordinating resources to improve the level and quality of services to youth at risk of chronic unemployment. The SEIY approach calls for the establishment of a state-level council of key officials to oversee an assessment of youth needs and an inventory of existing resources and programs; the development of a comprehensive youth service strategy; and the establishment of the policy and operational linkages that would permit implementation of the service strategy. The SEIY approach also requires each state council to utilize existing resources from agencies represented on the council to provide funding for those local programs that best exemplify the substantive and coordinative goals that the council has adopted.

The demonstration's goal was to set in motion a process that would, over time, increase total resources dedicated to at-risk youth, better coordinate the use of existing resources, and improve the quality and extent of local programming. The demonstration was implemented between September 1983 and March 1986 in Massachusetts, South Carolina and Oregon.

BACKGROUND

The youth who are the concern of the SEIY demonstration represent a small but critical segment of the larger youth population. The prospects of these youth for securing future employment, unlike those of the majority of their peers, are diminished by their lack of basic academic skills, poor work habits, inappropriate behavior and lack of know-how or contacts to gain access to the workplace. These youth include a disproportionate number of teenage parents, youth from low-income or minority backgrounds, and school dropouts.

In a paper prepared for P/PV, Dr. Henry Levin of Stanford University estimated that 30 percent of elementary and secondary school students in the United States are educationally disadvantaged and that the number is "increasing rapidly." He defines the educationally disadvantaged as those "who tend to complete few years of schooling, are more likely to drop out of high school and show lower test scores in virtually all academic subjects than their more advantaged peers." According to Dr. Levin, failure to deal with their problems will pose serious consequences to society.

The SEIY demonstration is based on two major premises. The first is that coordination of the activities and resources of the variety of agencies involved with at-risk youth -- among them

education, employment and training, social services and juvenile justice -- can lead to more effective services for these youth and to greater efficiency and accountability as well. Policymakers and practitioners have long criticized the current organization and delivery of youth services for its fragmentation, its failure to match youth with necessary services and its duplication of services. Moreover, the current organization is inconsistent with research findings that indicate the need for integrated, complementary services in order to improve the educational and employment prospects of at-risk youth.

The second premise on which SEIY is based is that states possess significant potential to play a more central role in the development of programs and policies concerning at-risk youth. Historically, states have had significant influence over key portions of the youth-serving bureaucracy, including welfare, juvenile corrections and education (primarily in their standard-setting and financing roles). In 1981, passage of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) shifted financial and policymaking responsibility in a number of other programs to state governments, thereby further expanding their role in services to the disadvantaged.

The 1982 passage of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) further enlarged the involvement of state governments in employment and training efforts. Governors were given responsibility for designating service delivery areas (SDAs), approving local job training plans, and distributing funds. Under JTPA, states were able to offer financial incentives to shape local employment and training programs. The legislation specifically provided for state incentives to stimulate coordinated school and JTPA programming on behalf of disadvantaged youth and adults. The JTPA legislation also included as a major goal the coordination of employment and training programs with other public agencies serving at-risk populations. It mandated services to disadvantaged youth and dropouts, and thus reinforced the goals and approach of SEIY.

THE APPROACH

The State Employment Initiatives for Youth demonstration tests an approach for assisting states to exercise effectively their role in developing policies and administering funds for at-risk youth. The SEIY approach provides a structure for the joint review, planning and development of youth service activities of numerous agencies. Through financial incentives and identification and elimination of institutional barriers, e.g. inconsistent rules, regulations and practices, the SEIY approach is designed to establish and lend support to more effective local programming for the at-risk population.

The process requires that state-controlled dollars be allocated to the Youth Coordinating Councils to support exemplary local programs. The council is required to (1) complete a needs assessment; (2) develop a comprehensive strategy for making improvements in youth services; and (3) select local programs for funding.

The Youth Coordinating Council -- designated by the governor -- includes representatives from state agencies involved with disadvantaged youth, key local leaders and representatives of the private sector. From this group, a lead agency is selected to be administrator for managing the council and the demonstration. Once in place, the councils provide a forum to diagnose need, determine priorities, and develop strategies.

Funds are allocated to each council from at least two sources of dollars under state control. Each state makes available between $400,000 and $500,000 each year for two years; these funds, distributed by the councils, are matched by cash and in-kind contributions from the local programs they were funding.

The purpose of the needs assessment is to gauge the extent of the problem, identify deficiencies in the youth service system (for example, missing or duplicative services and/or institutional barriers to effective programming). Analyses of the size, concentration and location of the at-risk youth population, and the type, quality and quantity of services required to meet their needs can reveal poorly used resources that can be programmed more effectively.

Building on the findings of the needs assessment, a comprehensive strategy is developed to establish state priorities and steps for making improvements in youth services. This strategy should not be static, but can be modified as new issues are identified and/or progress made in existing issues.

Local jurisdictions are expected to respond to the council's priorities with specific projects, a few of which are selected through a competitive process. These exemplary local programs provide fuel to the larger demonstration goals by offering evidence that disadvantaged youth can be served well through innovative, coordinated programs that encourage new institutional and financial arrangements and identify barriers to coordinated service delivery that can be addressed by the state.

To facilitate the work of the youth councils, P/PV provided each council with an on-site state coordinator, supplemented by additional technical assistance from P/PV staff and consultants. The coordinator was a senior-level staff person selected jointly by P/PV and state representatives; as an employee of P/PV, the coordinator could be independent of any single agency. It was expected that with support provided by technical staff of

individual state agencies, the coordinator could manage the day-to-day activities of the council, including the basic planning steps required by the demonstration.

THE DEMONSTRATION STATES

In the fall of 1983, P/PV and officials in Oregon, South Carolina and Massachusetts signed agreements to operate the SEIY demonstration. In each state, a Memorandum of Agreement endorsed by key officials -- the governor, the chief state school officer and/or the state employment and training official -- formalized commitments made during the site selection process and provided the structure for demonstration activities.

The three states were chosen after a six-month process in which P/PV visited or contacted officials in 24 states to explore their interest in a long-term, intensive approach to youth services. The reconnaissance effort found only limited interest in this demonstration.

Though it would be inappropriate to generalize from the experiences of three states to the remaining 47, Massachusetts, South Carolina and Oregon offer sufficient contrast to examine SEIY effects in widely varying environments. For example, Oregon is characterized by a long tradition of local control over administration and policymaking, a relatively weak governorship, and a troubled economy resulting from a substantial decline in timber sales and little growth in other sectors. Massachusetts, on the other hand, exhibits a "top-down" approach to policy and administrative decisions, a strong governorship, and a robust economy with the lowest unemployment rate of any state. South Carolina is unique among the states in the relationship among the governor, a highly decentralized state bureaucracy and the state legislature. As Neal Pierce describes in "The Book of America: Inside the Fifty States," and you will find no other [state] in which the legislature holds such preeminent power over the governor. The governor is only one of a committee of five that draws up the state budget." South Carolina, like Oregon, has been experiencing difficulties in a major sector of its economy, the textile industry, and thus is confronting serious dislocation among adult workers. As will be discussed later in this report, these conditions and other factors had a major bearing on the outcomes of the demonstration in each state.

Although this evaluation focuses on all three demonstration states, it should be noted that while Oregon and South Carolina continued in virtually the same status throughout the term of the project, Massachusetts and P/PV discontinued their formal operational relationship in the demonstration in early 1985. The primary reason for this outcome was disagreement between P/PV and the state regarding the potential for achieving SEIY goals within the demonstration timeframe. However, the initial project design

continued to guide Massachusetts' efforts, and the most significant aspects of the original model were maintained. The council, after significant membership changes, was reorganized in early 1986 and is currently functioning. Massachusetts participated fully in the interviews and data collection called for by the demonstration research design.

In South Carolina, there was a perception among state officials that fundraising difficulties (see below) altered the relationship between P/PV and the state, making it impossible to fulfill the Memorandum of Agreement. The need to arrange new funding provoked a legislative fight that held the demonstration and coordinator to unfavorable scrutiny. However, these problems did not appear to significantly affect demonstration outcomes.

FUNDING

Both public and private sources provided support to the demonstration. A consortium of private foundations that included The Ford Foundation, Aetna Life and Casualty Foundation, Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, Southern Education Foundation and M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust provided the support necessary for development and management of SEIY. Funding was also provided by the Oregon Department of Revenue and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). HHS funds were directed primarily to the creation of innovative local programs.

In order to participate in the demonstration, each state was required to allocate state-controlled funds to stimulate development of local programs. During the demonstration's two-year operational period, approximately $2.3 million was made available by the states for this purpose. In addition, fundraising difficulties experienced by P/PV during the course of the demonstration required a greater than anticipated financial involvement by Oregon and South Carolina.

Evaluation Design

The objectives of this evaluation are to:

- Assess implementation of the demonstration in each state;
- Determine progress made by each state in realizing the ultimate goal of comprehensive services for at-risk youth;
- Identify factors that facilitate and/or hinder the development of such services; and

- Distill lessons for policymakers and other states similarly concerned with the needs of at-risk youth.

In each state, the evaluation was conducted through on-site interviews and documentation analysis. The indicators for assessing progress toward such services were:

1. Increased priority for at-risk youth within service provider agencies. For change to occur, agency staff at both the line and policy level would have to devote increased attention to disadvantaged youth, with consequent changes in agency resource allocation and programming. Evidence includes written statements issued by agency commissioners; policy documents; changes in planning, budgeting and staffing; and modifications to rules and regulations concerning at-risk youth.

2. Increased priority for at-risk youth among state-level policymakers. Fulfillment of the SEIY mandate would involve increased support for youth programming and policy development from the governor and the legislature. Evidence includes speeches and written statements, proposals for new or changes in existing legislation, new appointments, agency or executive staff reorganization, and changes in planning or budgeting.

3. Increased collaborative activity among agencies. A major theme of SEIY is to increase coordination among state and local agencies that serve at-risk youth. Evidence of such coordination includes informal collaboration, formal agreements, modification of rules and policies, joint referral, and joint planning, staffing and funding.

4. Evidence of institutionalization of the demonstration mechanism, policies and programs. Continued success for SEIY depends upon the development of a base of support. Indicators include reallocation of state funding, extension of local support, incorporation of the Youth Coordinating Council into some other state body and/or legislation or gubernatorial action extending the YCC.

This evaluation is based on two major sources of information: site reports from project coordinators and interviews with key state officials. In South Carolina and Oregon, coordinators have documented program implementation through biweekly reports from the time of SEIY initiation through March 1986. In Massachusetts, documentation was interrupted with the resignation of the original project coordinator in December 1984. Continuing source material was provided by minutes of Youth Coordinating Council meetings and by internal YCC documents.

The evaluators conducted an extensive series of interviews in each state to gain a full perspective on the SEIY experience. Those interviewed included most YCC members, the project coordinator, gubernatorial aides, commissioners or high ranking staff of relevant agencies (varying by state but including the Departments of Education, Human Services, Welfare, Youth Services, the Employment Service and the state JTPA agency), state legislators, community leaders and newspaper reporters. Multiple visits were made to each state over the course of the demonstration.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter reviews both the form and substance of the demonstration: the Youth Coordinating Councils' structure, staffing and support; the issues they chose to deal with; and the local programs they supported in the three states.

OVERVIEW

The major conditions of the Memoranda of Agreement were met in each state, including an endorsement of and delegation of authority from the governor to the YCC, and funding as initially anticipated. Delays in establishing the council and hiring the coordinator in each state limited the operational period of the demonstration to two years. While this delay in start up limited implementation of the demonstration design in several areas (described below), it did not appear to be a significant factor in demonstration outcomes.

The youth council was, as planned, the focal point of the demonstration in each state. Composed of senior officials from agencies involved with disadvantaged youth and staffed by a state coordinator, the councils were designed as a forum in which representatives of the separate agencies could discuss youth issues, determine needs and priorities, and attempt to better integrate existing services within and among their respective agencies.

In two of the states, Oregon and Massachusetts, the councils serve as a statewide advisory, technical and informational resource for administrators and program operators. They have, moreover, become a means to consider often conflicting rules and regulations governing the youth policies of various agencies. Councils in these states meet regularly, appear increasingly effective, and are recognized within state government as a place to consider, if not initiate, youth policy.

The council in the third state, South Carolina, has less successfully fulfilled these functions, meeting irregularly and relying primarily upon the state coordinator to organize and operate the demonstration. Thus the council in South Carolina has been a less effective forum than in the other two states and is primarily identified with the funding of local projects.

STRUCTURE, STAFFING AND SUPPORT

Membership and Participation

All the councils have included representatives from a wide variety of youth-serving agencies dealing with education, JTPA,

vocational education, employment services, juvenile justice and social services. All councils also included a representative from local government and, in two of the states, a private sector representative. Attendance and participation have varied.

In Oregon, attendance by the council's 14 members was consistent throughout the demonstration. Representatives of several local governments, and of state agencies dealing with education employment and training, adult and family services, and juvenile courts were especially involved in council activities.

Attendance in Massachusetts, which fell off sharply after the first meeting, has since rebounded to 25 to 30 participants per meeting, including representatives from the Departments of Labor, Education, Social Services, Employment Services, Youth Services, and Mental Health; Board of Regents, and the Governor's Office of Education.

In South Carolina, council membership initially included representatives from the Departments of Youth Services, Employment Services, Vocational Rehabilitation and Mental Health; the Governor's Office of Employment and Training, and legislative and local school districts. Although these agencies remain on the YCC roster, the council itself has become inactive; it meets as a full group only once or twice a year. In place of the full Youth Coordinating Council, South Carolina has created a kind of executive committee composed of the chairperson, the coordinator and two other members.

South Carolina's Memorandum of Agreement calls for a level of agency participation that differs from that of the other two states: the council includes members with policymaking responsibility primarily at the deputy commissioner level. In Massachusetts and Oregon, by contrast, council participants (with a few notable exceptions) are mid-level staff with access to the senior administrative level, but with knowledge and experience of line agency functions. Massachusetts changed to this kind of organization when the initial council composition -- senior staff for whom council issues and agendas were not sufficient to promote ongoing attendance -- caused it to dissolve after one meeting. Over time, attendance and interest increased as mid-level staff became council members.

The councils in Oregon and Massachusetts met on a monthly basis. In both councils, business was accomplished largely through subcommittee, with the full council meeting primarily to act on recommendations or to determine future agendas. Subcommittees of both councils met as needed to deal with policy, evaluation, local projects and other issues. In South Carolina, subcommittees met as needed to accomplish specific agenda items, particularly the selection of local programs, but otherwise met irregularly or not at all.

Role of the Lead Agency

The roles of the lead agencies varied significantly in each of the states. Intended as an administrative "home" for council activities, the lead agencies in the three states established distinctly different relationships with the other members of the councils and their coordinators.

In Oregon, the lead agency, the Department of Education, provided administrative support, including salary and secretarial help, for the coordinator, contributed some funding to the initial demonstration pool, and became integrally involved in demonstration activities at both the state and local levels. Over the course of the demonstration, the Education Department also formally increased its internal priority for service to at-risk youth, developed and expanded innovative use of education and vocational funding to strengthen local-level collaboration, worked to lessen the administrative barriers that hampered joint agency operation and funding of activities, and in general did much to facilitate the establishment and expansion of council activities. The interaction between the Oregon YCC and the Department of Education was the most effective of any council-lead agency relationship in the demonstration. Although some state observers noted that the council's close ties with the Department of Education might have made other state agencies less receptive, this effect was outweighed by the positive benefits of the Education Department's strong leadership.

In Massachusetts, by contrast, close identification with the lead agency reduced the Youth Coordinating Council's scope, at least initially. Massachusetts is a highly competitive, "turf conscious" environment. Installing the council in the Office of Training and Employment Policy (OTEP), the state JTPA agency, made the council heir to OTEP's legacy of difficult interagency relationships. Perceived initially as a "tool" of OTEP and its commissioner, the council was damaged in its ability to serve as a collaborative instrument; some agencies were reluctant to participate. Since then, however, a conscious policy of "deOTEP-izing" its activities (including moving the council meeting place away from the agency) has increased the legitimacy accorded the YCC.

At the same time, the OTEP connection has had some significant benefits. The YCC has become closely linked with the JTPA system and has begun to exercise a role over 8% funding in its capacity as an advisory committee to the State Job Training Coordinating Council (SJTCC). OTEP has also provided the YCC with the administrative services of one half-time staff member.

Unlike those of the other two states, the South Carolina lead agency, the Governor's Office of Employment and Training, has had

little effect on or involvement with SEIY operations. While supporting the council administratively and financially, the agency has had no substantive involvement beyond limited technical assistance in administering funding and contract provisions. Although the agency directs JTPA in South Carolina, the YCC has not been involved in allocating youth-designated JTPA funds.

Role of the Chairperson

In Oregon and South Carolina, the Youth Coordinating Councils derived their identity and/or direction and focus from the designated chair. In these states the chair has done much to shape council outcomes.

In Oregon, the chair is a county commissioner interested in human service issues and strongly inclined toward "local control" and "bottom-up" development. She therefore focused the council on local demonstration projects and limited its action in influencing state level actors. However, with education issues dominant on the Oregon council's agenda, the chair and the state coordinator have made regular presentations to the State Board of Education to promote a more aggressive role by the state in altering policies and practices that aggravate the difficulties of poor and disadvantaged children in the schools. Similarly, the council chair has tried to encourage more targeted use of state JTPA 8% funds. She set overall priorities, determined which particular issues came before the council, and acted as a liaison between the council and other state agencies. In addition, she has recruited new members to the council and helped set the agenda for the coordinator.

In South Carolina, the chair is a state legislator who has been deeply involved in state education issues, most notably passage of the Education Improvement Act.[1] He has had a major influence on the demonstration by setting its overall priorities and strategy. That strategy -- designed to produce legislative action -- in large part rests on the chairperson's current position and future prospects in the legislature and is consistent with the relative influence of the state legislature in the state. Many council members attribute their participation to the chairperson's influence, and the image of the demonstration is clearly bound up with the chairperson's own identity. In addition to overall direction of demonstration efforts, the chairperson has also set the agenda of the coordinator, using him

[1] The Education Improvement Act is reform legislation passed by the South Carolina Legislature in 1984. It includes $60 million in state funds for remedial programs; establishes a process for assessing the performance of students, teachers and principals; and provides for state intervention in school districts where the quality of education is in jeopardy.

in a staff capacity to research issues and explore alternative approaches to youth problems.

The Massachusetts council initially designated a three-person chair. It was composed of the commissioner of education, the secretary of the Office of Economic Affairs and the chairperson of a local non-profit agency. Although the council's image was strongly identified with the secretary of economic affairs, neither she nor the other council co-chairs exerted the same degree of policy direction as did chairs in the other two states. Massachusetts' YCC is undergoing further organization as this report is being written, and a new chairperson has been named.

State Coordinator

The state coordinator position was established as part of the demonstration to facilitate the efforts of the Youth Coordinating Council. The coordinator was a member both of the P/PV staff and of the council. The rationale for the split role was that while status as a P/PV employee would increase the coordinator's independence and operating authority, grounding that role in the council and lead agency would provide a strong local base. The coordinator was therefore bound to observe P/PV's demonstration requirements as well as the council's own priorities and approaches for achieving demonstration goals, an objective not always easy to reconcile.

With technical and administrative support provided by individual state agencies, the coordinator was to serve as senior staff of the council: to arrange the agenda and meetings, implement the elements of the demonstration design and provide technical assistance to the local projects. In practice, the coordinators, particularly in South Carolina and Oregon, expanded this role, providing an unanticipated degree of support to the demonstration and the youth-serving system as a whole.

In addition to providing day-to-day management for SEIY, coordinators took on, in varying degrees, three other roles:

- Initiator of local-level coordination
- "At-large" advocate for at-risk youth
- Research staff to the YCC chairperson

Nevertheless, day-to-day management of the council was each coordinator's major responsibility. They were viewed as the chief communications link among council members, functioning simultaneously as staff, liaison and manager. In all three states, virtually no material was produced that was not written, coordinated, rewritten and distributed by the coordinator. Coordinators arranged meetings, set agendas in cooperation with the council chairperson and publicized demonstration activities. Coordinators were also responsible for implementing two major

elements of SEIY -- the needs assessment and the development of local projects. They arranged hearings and contacted agencies for the former and managed the RFP process for the latter.

In South Carolina, where the council was largely inactive, the coordinator expanded upon the daily management tasks described above to fill many of the functions intended for the council as a whole, determining direction and policy in conjunction with the chairperson and two other council members.

Partly as a natural consequence of the RFP procedure, coordinators in Oregon and South Carolina became more involved than expected in local project efforts. In Oregon especially, the coordinator enlarged his facilitating and technical assistance role: he promoted local projects, recruited new agencies and lobbied at both state and local levels to expand available financing and services. These efforts led to several innovative financial arrangements which stimulated agency involvement and contributed to the high degree of collaboration within Oregon's local projects. Existing local networks were enlarged and, in several localities, new ones formed.

In both South Carolina and Oregon, coordinators went beyond their formal responsibilities to become ombudsmen and advocates for at-risk youth within the state system. The testified at hearings on youth interests; served on committees to review or improve services in education and treatment of the handicapped, and to consider youth care issues; researched new programmatic or service improvement initiatives; and attended conferences and civic group meetings to widen awareness of youth problems. The broad scope of their activity linked the councils with non-council youth efforts, providing additional visibility and substance to both.

In South Carolina particularly, the coordinator also spent much of his time providing research support to the state legislator who serves as chairperson. While the bulk of this research serves the interests of at-risk youth (i.e. a feasibility study on involving the state courts in truancy reduction), the work was geared specifically to the interests and direction of the chairperson rather than of the YCC as a whole.

Allocation of Funds

To participate in the demonstration, each state was required to contribute from at least two state sources a total of $400,000 to $500,000 each year for two years. In addition to state funds, P/PV distributed $75,000 made available by the Department of Health and Human Services for support of local programs. It was envisioned that this initial financial commitment would give agencies a greater stake in council activities and that success-

ful experience planning for and allocating the use of the funds would encourage agencies to direct additional resources to the council.

In Oregon, the required financial commitment was realized with few complications. During the first year, $275,000 in Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) 8% funds and $125,000 in Vocational Education Act funds were allocated to the council. In the second year, changes in the federal Vocational Education Act, which diminished state discretionary funding, reduced the amount available from this source to $50,000; however, JTPA funding increased to $400,000. The local programs supported by these state dollars were required to produce a one-to-one cash or in-kind match. Thus, over a two-year period, the commitment of Oregon state funds leveraged an additional $800,000 in cash and in-kind contributions for a total of $1.65 million for local programs.

In addition, the Oregon Council was asked by the Oregon Consortium, a JTPA provider for 27 counties, to use its procedures and criteria to distribute $158,000 in 8% funds previously allocated by formula to the consortium. This enabled the council to select four programs in addition to the eight funded with combined JTPA and Vocational Education Act dollars. Further, as this evaluation was written, the State Job Training Coordinating Council (SJTCC) allocated $545,000 in unexpended 8% funds to the Youth Coordinating Council to serve disadvantaged youth.

In South Carolina, where the governor has significantly less influence over discretionary spending than in many other states, state funding came solely from the Governor's Office of Employment and Training, the state JTPA office, rather than from two sources as required. Securing the agency's commitment of $500,000 for each of the two years was problematic. Although South Carolina is recognized as a single statewide service delivery area by the federal government, in four counties decisionmaking is shared with local Private Industry Councils (PICs). The council needed and ultimately received support from these PICs for the level of funding required by projects selected by the council.

The requirement that local programs match council funds also presented difficulties in South Carolina. Few council members were aware of the obligation of local programs to match state funds; once aware, many council members were unhappy with the required match and viewed it as an onerous requirement. Ultimately, then, the match averaged 35 cents on the dollar in the first year; in the second year the council required each local project to match 40 percent of the project's budget. According to the state coordinator, the total amount of staff time, program services and equipment provided by localities came to $550,000 in the second year.

In Massachusetts, $500,000 derived from JTPA and state education funds was allocated to the council in the first year of local program operation. In the second year, with less interest by the council in operating local programs (see next section), state Department of Education funds were added to JTPA funds and a single RFP using JTPA 8% criteria was issued for service delivery areas to use these funds.

During the course of the project, P/PV, as a result of funding difficulties, requested increased financial participation from the states. Both South Carolina and Oregon agreed, and assumed financial responsibility for the state coordinators, who had been supported by P/PV. Effective April 1, 1984, the coordinator in South Carolina became a contract employee of the Governor's Office/Division of Employment and Training. Funds for the Oregon state coordinator were provided by the SJTCC through the Department of Education, and transmitted to P/PV; the state preferred that the coordinator continue as an employee of P/PV. Following Massachusetts' withdrawal from formal participation in the demonstration, an employee of the lead agency, OTEP, was designated to serve as coordinator with half-time responsibility for the council.

PROGRAM AND POLICY INITIATIVES

In all states, the councils initially focused on implementing exemplary local projects rather than on state agency policy changes. This emphasis was not necessarily by design, but caused by the complexity of the councils' overall mission and the need to fulfill the mandate for start up of local projects. As a consequence, first-year activities centered on determining priorities for at-risk youth in the state, and then designing and implementing local programs that met those priorities. Since that time, however, the three Youth Coordinating Councils have diverged in direction and overall strategy. Broad initial goals have been shaped into a narrower focus better suited to the environment, resources and actors that characterize each state.

Issues and Priorities

From a uniform design, each council has adapted to the institutional and political realities of its state. In Massachusetts, the council has changed its aim and perspective. Initially, as in other states, the YCC focused on exemplary local projects as a way to institute collaboration. The initial focus on the local projects in Massachusetts was influenced by an OTEP policy to transform local Private Industry Councils, created under the JTPA, into strong area-planning bodies responsible for the full array of employment and training resources in their communities. Over time, however, council members began to rethink the mission and priorities of the council. Surrounded by a multitude of

competing programs and initiatives funded by agencies with a greater capacity for program operation, some council members judged that a more relevant council priority would be to link the disparate pieces of state activity.

Inspired in part by the E-T Choices Program -- an effort to aid welfare recipients by linking different agencies -- the council has de-emphasized exemplary local projects in favor of promoting state agency interaction through the council meetings themselves. The large scale of the Massachusetts bureaucracy, the number of youth-serving agencies, the variety of programs offered and the infrequency of regular contact among youth planners have given the council legitimacy as a clearinghouse and meeting place for youth-serving agencies. This, in addition to its new advisory role in JTPA funding, has made the council more attractive to its various members.

Incentives for participating in the Massachusetts council include the opportunity to gain additional money or services for a member's respective agency, the chance to disseminate successful agency programs, and the chance to interact with peers. It functions as a forum for youth planners and as a source of technical assistance. The administration of grants and projects funded by the member agencies can potentially be channeled through or reviewed by the council.

In Oregon, the council has continued to focus on developing and facilitating exemplary local projects. While the SEIY design anticipated local efforts as one factor in developing a statewide collaborative framework, in Oregon the strong tradition of local control has influenced YCC strategy and made these projects the prime impetus behind the demonstration's development. The Oregon council has also focused on three closely related areas:

1. Developing local-level interagency cooperation with the intent of establishing a local coordinative framework;

2. Developing state agency changes in rules, service definition and allocation of resources to facilitate this local programming; and

3. Disseminating throughout the state the local project and policy innovations developed through the above techniques.

Specifically, the Oregon model has been to use a competitive RFP process that requires service to specific target populations, participation in operations and financing by a variety of local agencies, and clear evidence of local ability to sustain council-financed projects to improve overall youth programming. This strategy has been supported by state-level efforts to use funds

already designated for local projects, and by advocating state-level policy change to expand links among local service providers.

Educational issues in particular have dominated the council agenda in Oregon. The needs assessment process had uncovered a little-used provision of Oregon law that, according to the council's analysis:

> ...makes clear that schools have the responsibility to those over 16 who have provided written notice of intent to withdraw, to propose to the pupil and document to the parent, legal guardian, or person in parental relationship, alternative programs of instruction and counseling or regular program instruction combined with counseling. The same section of the statute indicates that state Basic School Support funds can be used to support a student's participation in an alternative education program registered by the Department of Education when the school is involved with placement.

Through the local projects, the council has attempted to use this statute to better serve dropouts and potential dropouts, and to underscore continued responsibility of the schools to youth although they have dropped out. The results are detailed in later sections of the evaluation.

A second major theme of the Oregon council has been the need to develop relationships between social services, educational institutions and employment and training agencies -- relationships that would allow ongoing support to at-risk youth while they are in vocational preparation programs, and/or would facilitate access to such programs.

To date, Oregon has focused very little on influencing legislative action or gaining gubernatorial support. According to the state coordinator, the council questioned the usefulness of obtaining active support from a governor who would soon be leaving office. Legislative action was not viewed as immediately appropriate since project results were not available.

Incentives for participation in the Oregon council include the opportunity to influence local projects, gain knowledge and access to services and resources, and develop a better perspective on the priorities and issues motivating other youth- serving agencies.

In South Carolina, the demonstration evolved quite differently, with the primary emphasis placed upon instituting change through the legislature, where the YCC chairperson is a powerful member and committee chairperson. South Carolina has instituted

exemplary local projects constructed around a desire to build both the foundation for a local coordinative framework (as in Oregon), and a discrete model to be replicated through eventual legislative action. There has been less emphasis on self-sustaining projects or on expansion of local project efforts beyond initial parameters. Thus, the South Carolina demonstration has largely rested upon the hopes of a long-term legislative strategy built upon the success of the local projects and the influence of the YCC chairperson. Specifically, the strategy promotes legislative support for statewide replication of the current local project model based on:

1. Two years of successful, well-publicized demonstration experience in local sites;

2. Completion of a study estimating the costs to the state in health, welfare and correctional and social services dollars over the lifetime of an at-risk youth who has not benefited from intervention, as opposed to potential contributions from youth who have received enhanced services; and

3. Increased priority for at-risk youth generated by activities of the Youth Coordinating Council.

In addition, the South Carolina effort has included other legislative proposals for at-risk youth generated by the YCC or the project coordinator. At the request of the chairperson, the state coordinator developed a proposal that would remedy idiosyncratic application of truancy laws and increase attendance among potential dropouts. However, there has been little evidence to date of success in pursuing this or other legislative efforts, nor has there been success in gaining gubernatorial support.

Many of the incentives for council participation present in the other states are missing in South Carolina. According to the state coordinator, the late start up limited the council's opportunity to develop effective group decisionmaking processes or programmatic focus. The council's strategy, centering on gaining legislative support, is a long-term one with few milestones along the way. Further, few policy issues have surfaced to gain the council's attention; nor has it been able to develop a link to existing related issues such as implementation of the Education Improvement Act, the Employment Revitalization Act or a three-year Remediation Initiative undertaken by the JTPA agency.

Local projects, of strong interest in Oregon, generated less interest in South Carolina except among a very small core of council members. The projects have little variety. Not much in the way of additional support or collaboration has grown around them, and they are not viewed as a dynamic form of intervention. Apart from decisions to be made around funding time, the local

projects inspire little discussion and are not seen as a potential resource for state-level council members, regardless of the degree of involvement of their particular agencies.

Neither local projects nor the prospect of gaining access to information on state-level services or funding offered little incentive for agency collaboration. Resources are scarce in South Carolina; as one high-level agency staffer said, "There is nothing to collaborate around." Information sharing, too, is less of an incentive in South Carolina than in other states: the state environment is small and not particularly complex, and many policymakers are already aware of programs at other agencies.

Finally, the council fills little need for interaction. As noted earlier, many council members already have regular meetings in other forums.

In sum, South Carolina's has been the least effective of the Youth Coordinating Councils, lacking the incentive derived in other states from dynamic local projects (Oregon) or a complex and resource-rich state environment (Massachusetts).

Needs Assessment and Strategy Development

The purpose of the needs assessments conducted by the councils was to identify deficiencies in the youth-serving system, and to help the councils plan their strategies and focus them on specific, programmatic issues. Each youth-serving agency in the state was to be surveyed to determine the size, concentration and location of the at-risk youth population it served and the kind, quality and quantity of services required to ameliorate existing problems. Although the needs assessment did generally inform the councils and help them develop overall priorities, the specific goals of analyzing available services and matching them with needy populations was not fulfilled because many agencies initially proved reluctant to share information fully, or were unwilling to put in the effort required to package it in a useful way for the council. In Oregon, the formal needs assessment was supplemented by a series of four regional forums on at-risk youth throughout the state; in South Carolina, data were supplemented by a two-day policy forum conducted by the YCC. In all three states, the needs assessment tended to focus on two or three subgroups of at-risk, unserved youth such as pregnant or parenting teens, youth involved in the correctional system, and/or potential dropouts.

In no state were the results of the needs assessment accepted as comprehensive, nor were they universally recognized as valid by participating agencies. Problems included a lack of comprehensive data, difficulty correlating data from one agency with that of another and, in some cases, lack of agency cooperation.

Some agency staff did not see value in the needs assessment. One state lead agency staffer, for example, noted that the needs assessment "didn't matter; we know the problems are there." Some coordinators, too, questioned the needs assessment process. While conceding the theoretic value of such a survey, they felt that its worth was diminished by time constraints, limited dollars and inadequate staff support.

In no state did the needs assessment identify the points of system intervention envisioned by P/PV's demonstration planners. However, despite these flaws, in all three states the needs assessment filled three specific purposes:

- It raised the profile of the problem of at-risk youth, focusing, if only for a brief time, the attention of agency policymakers on this population.

- It helped to provide coherence to the issue of at-risk youth who had previously been seen as tenuously connected, separate populations with diverse problems.

- It stimulated and supported Youth Coordinating Councils as they targeted local projects and populations to be served. This was particularly true in Oregon, where the focus on alternative education, Basic School Support funding and target populations derived in part from results of the needs assessment.

LOCAL PROGRAMS

The demonstration was designed as a two-tiered process in which the development of local programs would mirror coordination at the state level and create a dynamic of reciprocal support between the two levels of government. The local projects were envisioned as a spur to innovative institutional arrangements, and ultimately as tangible evidence that at-risk youth could be effectively served by a variety of program approaches operated on a pilot basis in a relatively low-risk and controlled environment.

The selection of the local programs was to emerge from a council's broad-based strategy founded on the conclusions of the needs assessment. While implementing short-term programmatic initiatives, the council was to continue work on longer-term systems refinements.

The emphasis in all three states has been the local projects. This emphasis resulted from a sense of urgency -- local programs would be concrete proof of the demonstration's existence -- and from confusion about how to approach the more complicated policy dialogue. This attention to local programs has resulted in some important examples of local collaboration.

South Carolina

The South Carolina council's work has been aimed at creating and implementing a single model that uses the schools as the locus for bringing intensive support to at-risk youth. This interest in the schools as a center for the local projects appears to stem largely from the state coordinator and the council chairperson's long-term involvement in state education issues in general, and from the passage of the Education Improvement Act in particular.

The school-based model seeks to achieve two major objectives. First, it encourages state and local agencies at the community level to work together to identify the employability development needs of specific at-risk youth and to use existing resources to meet those needs. Second, it works to improve the school attendance, academic performance and behavior of project youth. The goal of the projects is not to prepare youth for immediate employment, but to ensure that "they are acquiring the skills, awareness, and attitudes that will enable them to become more competitive when they enter the labor market after high school." (Crosby Lewis 1986).

In the 1985-86 school year, nine communities -- involving a minimum of 500 students -- were implementing the model. This included the cities of Aiken, Allendale, Charleston, Columbia, Spartanburg, Sumter, Union, and Fairfield and Lee Counties. (Aiken, Charleston, Spartanburg and Fairfield participated in the abbreviated first round of the model's implementation; they were selected to do so based on the prior experience of individual council members with those areas.) A tenth site, the Georgetown-Horry Technical Education College, one of the state's 16 vocational technical colleges, was implementing a project designed to serve dropouts.

Currently, youth served by the school-based projects are primarily in-school, economically disadvantaged 14- to 18-year-olds in grades seven-10. They have had some contact with the criminal justice system, are two or more years over age for the grade in which they are enrolled, do not meet the state's minimum reading and/or math standards, have received more than one disciplinary suspension from school, and/or are teenage parents. In each site, the projects bring together a team of one or more members of the local school system and representatives of the local offices of at least two state agencies. Most frequently these representatives are from the Department of Youth Services, the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Mental Health, the Employment Security Commission, or the Commission on Drug and Alcohol Abuse.

These Youth Development Teams meet at least once each month to review systematically the cases of all project youth, identify

their needs for employability development and develop individual plans for meeting their needs. In theory, team members are to draw on their knowledge of other agencies to broker required services including counseling, assistance in finding part-time employment, pre-employment training, basic skills remediation and assessment. Each project receives $40,000 in council funds which is typically used to support a project facilitator who assists the team in case management and in filling gaps in services, e.g. remediation efforts and pre-employment training. These funds have been matched by in-kind contributions consisting primarily of staff time.

During the summer of 1985, Department of Health and Human Service funds made available to the state through P/PV provided employability development services to 86 youth. They participated in the first round of four school-based projects and required a more intensive level of services than the Summer Youth Employment and Training Program (SYETP) could offer. Three of the four projects, (operated by school districts in Fairfield, Spartanburg and Richland), provided remediation in math and reading skills during the six-week summer activity. The use of funds for a summer component reflects the council chairperson's concern that organized summer activity is an important factor in preparing disadvantaged youth for future success.

According to council members, these projects are the only evidence of collaborative activity resulting from the demonstration in South Carolina. While involvement is uneven among the agencies, they have committed staff and other resources to make the local projects work. The Department of Youth Services (DYS) and Vocational Rehabilitation have been cited as being particularly responsive, fulfilling their initial commitment of local personnel despite some strain on case loads.

In the case of DYS, the deputy commissioner made a strong personal commitment to the local projects, ensuring that local staff could, as he put it, "go the extra mile" to make demonstration projects work despite competing priorities. It is likely that DYS made a greater commitment to the local projects because juvenile offenders were targeted as the focus of the demonstration in the Memorandum of Agreement between P/PV and the State. Thus, DYS initially had more to gain from the projects than other agencies. One exception to the general responsiveness of state agencies has been the Employment Security Commission (ESC) where there has been difficulty getting the local agency to commit personnel; it has, in some instances, indicated that it could participate only if compensated. ESC staff claim they are committed to local demonstration projects but have suffered large cutbacks; reduced federal funding has put added pressure on local staff.

Six of the 10 current projects will continue to receive funding beyond the demonstration period: four have been approved for funding by their relevant Private Industry Councils; one will continue with a combination of federal and local funds; and one will continue with local school district funding.

The strongest commitment to this model has come from the state coordinator and a small group of the most active council members, which includes the chairperson, chairperson of the demonstration committee and deputy chair. According to the state coordinator, the concept of the Youth Development Teams has real value because, in many communities, they may be the only forum in which representatives from various agencies regularly come together to discuss client needs. The chairperson has attempted to build support for the idea through articles and approaches to fellow members of the legislature, most notably the chairperson of the Joint Legislative Committee on Children. To date, these efforts have not been successful and the future of the council's team model remains uncertain.

Oregon

The Oregon Council has supported diverse local program approaches targeted to the needs of juvenile offenders, teenage parents, dropouts and potential dropouts. Department of Health and Human Service funds have enabled the council to offer support services -- e.g. childcare and counseling -- to participants in five existing alternative education and employment training programs. In addition, HHS funds have supported a Portland project that stabilizes runaway and homeless youth with support services (e.g. counseling, housing, medical assistance and graduated work adjustment) before they move on to regular JTPA programs. In the first year, council-funded projects served more than 573 youth; it is anticipated that they will serve approximately 500 youth in the second year.

These projects are exemplary in a number of ways: (1) local financing reprograms dollars from their traditional uses to alternative approaches; (2) education, employment and juvenile justice agencies achieve a high degree of collaboration; (3) a package of services is provided for at-risk youth; and (4) programs are continued through local funds once state dollars are no longer available. The strength of Oregon's programs were greatly enhanced by the state coordinator's substantial practical knowledge of youth employment and training programs, and his obvious talent for building linkages among very different organizations.

The first round of local programs, like the second, was selected through a widely-disseminated RFP. During the first year, consistent with the council's priorities, three of the four projects emphasized providing alternative education and remedia-

tion services to at-risk youth. Two sites, in Portland and Clackamas County, did so by using Basic School Support funds. One site used the Comprehensive Competencies Program (CCP) to provide remediation services. In Portland, the project resulted in an agreement for the transfer of Basic School Support funds from the public schools to the Private Industry Council when the PIC enrolls any youth under the age of 21 who has not completed secondary school. The fourth first-year site focused on developing a more consolidated delivery system to improve access to services for youth living in rural areas.

The quality of Oregon's programs improved in the second year. Most council members agreed that this was directly related to an improved Request for Proposals, which incorporated lessons from the first year and solicited proposals that:

- Focused on the needs of dropouts, potential dropouts, juvenile offenders and teenage parents;
- Emphasized remediation/alternative education combined with work experience and vocational training; and,
- Involved education, employment and training agencies, and the state and local human service agencies responsible for providing service to the selected target group in both project planning and execution.

The second-year effort was best exemplified by the Vocational Options Project sponsored by Clackamas Community College, Employment and Training and Business Services and 12 local school districts. The project provided vocational training to disadvantaged in-school and out-of-school youth. The 12 participating school districts that referred youth to the vocational training center also contributed $1,500 a slot from Basic School Support funds and local revenues to support the program.

Unlike traditional vocational education offerings, the program is open-entry/open-exit. Students have a variety of options; for example, they may combine their vocational training with work, attendance at their local high school or participation in an alternative education program developed last year by the same sponsors. The project therefore responds to long-standing issues of access to vocational training for disadvantaged students. Including problems associated with credit requirements and rigid sequencing in course offerings.

In addition, the second-round projects included:

- An effort to establish in a 15-county area a more effective system for delivering education, employment and training services to juvenile

offenders by involving a wide array of service providers and building on court-ordered restitution and service;

- A project sponsored by the PIC and the school district in Eugene that provides part-time employment and remediation services to potential dropouts and includes a parent support group; and

- Childcare, pre-employment training, peer support and education for teen parents in Linn-Benton counties. Referred by the schools, public welfare and local hospitals, participants enrolled in the JTPA program and could attend a remediation center, continue in the local school, or attend community college.

Just as significant as the innovative funding and institutional arrangements that characterize these projects was the extent to which the council was able to use them to review needed changes in the state administrative apparatus. For example, prompted by the state legislature's decision to "downsize" the state's juvenile detention facilities, the council funded the juvenile delinquency project to test and develop an effective local model for serving juvenile offenders. A feature of the Eugene project was experimentation with two administrative rules drafted by the Oregon Department of Education. One rule conceived by the superintendent of instruction would provide for a leave of absence for potential dropouts and a second would require local education agencies to identify, monitor and develop special programs for at-risk youth. The department has now decided that it will defer consideration of the two administrative rules and seek comprehensive legislation that addresses these issues as well as other changes concerning at-risk youth.

Slow referrals of teenage parents in the Young Parents Project disclosed a series of problems in state and national regulations and policies for serving Oregon's 4,200 teenage parents on welfare. These problems prevented the youth from receiving education, employment and training services. A short-term solution, devised through the council for the Young Parents Project, was to have JTPA staff sign on as volunteers in the local welfare office and agree to confidentiality requirements. (Oregon law prohibits disclosure of client information to state agencies, but not to volunteers.) A longer-term response is legislation being prepared by Adult and Family Services that would permit referrals from its agency to JTPA. The department is also considering the placement of a youth specialist in each local office to ensure that teenage parents and other teenage welfare recipients receive adequate levels of service.

This ability to use the local programs as a point of departure for policy development results from having a council composed of middle managers with both a "hands-on" approach to service delivery and a familiarity with the policy issues that drive their agencies. They are in a position to raise programmatic concerns in a larger context. In addition, the diverse population served by the Oregon projects has given a number of agencies a sense that they have a stake in the council and allowed progress to be made in one area when obstacles surfaced in others.

Massachusetts

Like the Oregon Youth Council, the Massachusetts council used a competitive RFP process to select four local programs for funding with state education and JTPA funds. The stated aim of these projects -- in Brockton, the Berkshires, Cambridge and Boston -- was "to coordinate services among education and social services for at-risk youth." The specific goals of these local projects were to:

- Improve client education and employability by providing a network of services that would address the multiple barriers that at-risk youth face, and

- Promote coordination at the state level through the Youth Coordinating Council as well as among local service delivery agencies.

These first-year projects served approximately 90 youth, including pregnant and parenting youth, dropouts and potential dropouts, and youth involved with the criminal justice system.

Each of the projects provided participants with a range of services that generally included some combination of the following: basic education (pre-GED, GED, basic reading and math improvement), career exploration (job shadowing, tryout employment, work experience), counseling, support services and vocational training. Each project also involved a range of organizations in service delivery. Typically these included the public schools, the local JTPA service delivery area or Private Industry Council, local not-for-profits such as the YMCA and, in some instances, higher education institutions and the Departments of Public Welfare and Social Services.

An independent evaluation of these local projects conducted for the Youth Coordinating Council found that in two of them -- in Brockton and the Berkshires -- a significant degree of collaboration had been achieved among agencies. In Brockton, the evaluator of Project Climb reported "continuous active participation by many agencies since the planning stages of the project...built on

long-standing professional and personal relations among the members of the participating groups."

In the Berkshires project, which was selected by the council because it proposed what appeared to be an innovative model of interagency coordination, the evaluator found a "viable and energetic organizational entity." In the Berkshires, 36 agencies signed an agreement -- the Competency Coalition Compact -- which "significantly broadened the range of referrals available when clients come into contact with a specific agency" and which created new awareness of existing services.

In the second year, when the council de-emphasized local programs, state education funds were merged with the total amount of JTPA 8% funding. An RFP was issued jointly by the state Department of Education and the Office of Training and Employment Policy soliciting a single proposal from each Private Industry Council for education and training services under the Governor's Education Coordination grant. The goal of the RFP was to elicit proposals that: provided effective educational and employment services; established the PICs as the focal point of a comprehensive planning process; and resulted from joint, public-private decisionmaking. The outcome of the RFP process was not available as this evaluation was being written.

Throughout the demonstration, there was concern at P/PV over the degree of attention paid to the local programs and the attendant lack of focus on state-level issues and policies. However, local programs did, in fact, serve three critical purposes.

1. They engaged the attention of agency representatives. In their absence, it is unclear how this would have been accomplished.

2. They contributed to an assessment and understanding of the complexities of the youth-serving system. This was most striking in Oregon where state agency officials became aware of institutional barriers to collaboration and services to at-risk youth. In at least one instance, a local project encouraged an agency to seek more data on a specific population under its jurisdiction as well as to undertake a comprehensive review of departmental regulations and procedures that affected the population.

3. They established a bridge between administrators and policymakers at the state and local levels. The dialogue between the two levels of government was enhanced by the combination of state funding and local match for local programs, which created at least a perception that the financial burden of serving at-risk youth was being

shared. Again, shared funding of local projects was most influential in Oregon, where both state JTPA and vocational education funding combined with a high degree of local match to support an array of experiments to meet the needs of at-risk youth.

III. FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

This chapter is an attempt to present and analyze the findings of the evaluation and to distill lessons that might be applied to future efforts of this kind. It is divided into three parts: (1) major findings; (2) factors that affected implementation of the demonstration; and (3) replication and operational lessons.

MAJOR FINDINGS

SEIY was designed to expand and improve the quality and delivery of programs essential in each state to meet the needs of youth at risk: low-income youth, youth involved with the criminal justice system, teenage parents and others. In establishing this goal, the demonstration intended to make more rational a fragmented youth-serving system that was both inefficient and inequitable -- a poorly coordinated patchwork of agencies that failed to provide service to many youths and allocated resources poorly.

As a demonstration with limited time and resources, SEIY should be judged in the short term on its ability to stimulate change and, in the longer term, on its ability to generate sustained and expanded initiatives. Accordingly, two questions are key to evaluating the success of this effort: (1) Did SEIY improve the youth-serving system beyond short-term demonstration effects? (2) Have these improvements brought about continued work toward increased coordination of youth planning and programming?

To answer these questions, four indicators of progress guided this evaluation. They are:

- Increased priority for at-risk youth within service agencies;
- Increased priority for at-risk youth among policymakers;
- Increased collaboration among agencies at the state and local level; and
- Institutionalization of the demonstration.

Increased Priority For At-Risk Youth Within Service Agencies

The SEIY demonstration was designed to raise the profile of unserved at-risk youth within youth-serving agencies -- Education, Employment and Training, Human Services, Juvenile Justice, Vocational Education, and others. It was hypothesized that increased visibility created by the activities of Youth Coordina-

ting Council activities and local projects would compel the staff of these various agencies to focus attention and resources on this underserved population.

Fulfillment of this goal has been mixed, both across and within demonstration sites. The demonstration was largely successful in establishing and raising visibility for unserved at-risk youth among the mid-level policymakers who sat on the YCCs, and among their peers in the service provider agencies represented on the council. But this success, with one significant exception, did not extend beyond council members or mid-level staff. Only in Oregon were high-level agency staff, including two commissioners, both aware and actively supportive of demonstration goals.

In all states, YCC members reported increased awareness of the problem and increased interest in working for solutions. Beyond this point, it is more difficult to generalize about the impact on agency policies.

In South Carolina, few changes in agency policy were apparent, and these largely revolved around changes in staffing required to service local demonstration projects. The demonstration has not been a serious factor in the planning, staffing or budgeting decisions of any agency nor is it seen as a key resource by agency commissioners or directors.

In Massachusetts, a somewhat more pronounced effect was evident: heightened sensitivity within agencies to the need for collaboration and increased attention to the problems of dropout youth. (Collaboration among state agencies is a major theme of the Dukakis administration, but this had not been extended to the issue of at-risk youth.) In addition, the Massachusetts council was given a degree of control over some JTPA spending -- setting performance outcomes, influencing priorities and aiding in the development of the RFP. Finally, in making additional funds available for employment services, the council promoted the redirection of resources to better serve at-risk youth.

Only in Oregon were demonstrable changes in agency policy evident, at least in part as a result of implementing the demonstration. The most significant change was in the Department of Education, where the state superintendent of schools identified at-risk youth as one of six Board of Education priorities for 1986-87 and called for "a comprehensive strategy to provide effective public and private alternative educational programs for youth." Initially, recommendations proposed by the department involved a series of rule changes; however, the state Board of Education, when presented with these changes, requested a more comprehensive strategy to respond to at-risk youth needs. To develop this strategy, the superintendent created a task force that included representatives from virtually every major interest group in the state with a stake in education issues. The task

force's preliminary recommendations to the state Board of Education concerned a number of areas including: new state funding that provides financial incentives to school districts for improving services to at-risk youth; additional staff at the state Board of Education to offer technical assistance to local school districts seeking promising approaches to serving at-risk youth; and a requirement that each school district prepare a plan that addresses the needs of at-risk youth.

As this evaluation was being written, the state Board of Education was completing its budget initiatives for the upcoming biennium. Included among its budget priorities is an initiative for at-risk youth. This initiative includes: development by the state Department of Education of a system to identify and track at-risk youth that would be implemented by all school districts; model programs to serve the at-risk population; and establishment of a special account within the Basic School Support fund to provide incentives to school districts for services to this population. The estimated cost of this initiative is approximately $5 million.

These changes in the Education Department can be largely attributed to the YCC, and particularly to the efforts of one Education Department staff member who was a YCC member and the chairperson of its policy committee. He credits the council with strengthening his advocacy role in the department, and YCC policy recommendations for influencing and supporting the resultant changes: "There may have been some things that would have happened (without the YCC) but there is a direction that would not have been there otherwise."

Another notable policy change that the demonstration accomplished in the Department of Education was the expansion of Basic School Support Funds to fund alternative services in some of the local demonstration projects (see below). While the legislature had previously approved the use of Basic School Support funds for alternative education, these funds had been substantially underutilized. The demonstration, through the initiative of the project coordinator, marked the first real effort to use these funds for alternative service provision to youth at risk of long-term unemployment. In addition, the department has agreed to support training for one of its staffers in the Comprehensive Competencies Program (CCP) to provide technical assistance to school districts and alternative education programs throughout the state.

A second agency where new emphasis for at-risk youth is evident is the Department of Human Resources (DHR), a super agency encompassing the welfare system, juvenile courts and correctional facilities, health and other major services. As a direct result of one of the YCC's local projects, a program for young parents, the DHR commissioner has redirected the department's goals and

budget for the next biennium to reflect a greater priority for teen parents. Specific changes include:

- An expanded mission for the Health Division, which is to take the lead in working on prevention of teen pregnancy, cooperating with the Welfare and Children's Services Divisions on education programs;

- An attempt to increase the responsiveness of DHR agencies to the needs of teen parents through changes in regulations, procedures and allocation of resources; and

- Provision of more training in parenting through the Children's Services Division.

As this evaluation was being written, the department has prepared a budget request that would include funding for a teen parent and pregnancy initiative. Estimated cost of the initiative is $8.6 million.

In addition, the demonstration has stimulated attention to employability development for clients of juvenile justice agencies whose primary concern traditionally has been community protection.

Other, smaller changes were evident outside the Department of Education and the Department of Human Resources, most notably in the spending of JTPA funds. Largely as a result of YCC efforts, at-risk youth and remediation became priorities in the allocation of 8% money to the service delivery areas. SDAs without programs directed to the needs of at-risk youth are now required to develop a service plan for this population to qualify for funding.

Increased Priority for At-Risk Youth Among Policymakers

A key assumption of SEIY planners was that the existence of the demonstration -- its funding, its focus, its council and local projects -- would compel the attention of the governor and legislature. In particular, it was felt that the commitment of the governor to a Memorandum of Agreement, establishing and supporting the demonstration's implementation, would ensure some continuing statewide attention and priority for the SEIY effort, a commitment that would only increase as the project was successfully implemented.

This assumption has not been fully realized. While governors in the three states signed the Memorandum of Agreement, this proved to be simply the endorsement necessary for initiating SEIY. It did not reflect any real involvement in the issue by the governor

or designated associates. The effect of SEIY in increasing priority for at-risk youth must be judged against the background of limited executive support.

In no state has there been a significant increase in the attention or priority accorded to at-risk youth by the governor's office, nor indeed any real gubernatorial interest in the demonstration beyond the ceremonial. Similarly, with the possible exception of South Carolina (where a prominent legislator chairs the council), there has been little or no evidence of increased legislative involvement in this issue.

In all three states, the lack of active gubernatorial support can be attributed to competing interests and limited resources that caused the governors to commit themselves to other programs seen as more compelling. At-risk youth were not viewed as a separate and important policy priority.

Legislative impact has been hampered by many of the same factors: competing initiatives and a need to maintain existing programs rather than to innovate. In addition, since the Youth Coordinating Councils had to focus initially on local project implementation, the consequent lack (until quite recently) of programmatic findings slowed the development of a legislative program or lobbying effort.

Increased Collaboration Among State Agencies

Underlying SEIY is the premise that the current allocation of resources and services for at-risk youth is inefficient; that this inefficiency is caused in part by the division of resources and responsibility among a variety of agencies; and that the demonstration mechanism would provide a basis to coordinate policy and more efficiently share resources.

To date, a high degree of state-level collaboration on planning, budgeting and staffing has not occurred, although there has been some progress. Oregon and Massachusetts have shown both a notable increase in contact among agencies where none had previously existed and greater sharing of information on program plans and common problems. In addition, the youth councils in these states have functioned as brokers, linking youth-serving agencies with programs and resources available elsewhere.

Political scientist Carl Van Horne has defined three levels of coordination:

> Notification and information sharing among two or more agencies is the simplest step in the direction toward coordination. Various agencies share relevant data collected on problems of mutual concern, and inform one another of planned or actual programs.

Consultation between two or more agencies requires greater commitment, because agencies seek each other's advice and/or endorsement of proposals or actions. Nevertheless, one agency retains sole control and responsibility for the plan or for program administration.

Shared Control is the most demanding category of coordination for planning or implementation. Here agencies agree to jointly participate in planning and administration and share responsibility for decisions and accountability for outcomes. Normally one or both agencies yield some of their accustomed control or autonomy in order to achieve shared control. One of the best measures of the intensity of coordination during project planning or implementation is the amount of resources committed by each agency.

In Oregon and Massachusetts, and to a lesser degree South Carolina, service provider agencies have achieved collaboration at the first level. They have made a genuine, if limited, commitment to the Youth Coordinating Councils by assigning mid- to upper-level staff and allowing them the time and latitude to discuss agency plans and programs as well as issues of common interest.

To date, state-level collaboration has advanced to the second level in Oregon, and, to a more limited degree, in Massachusetts.

The council has also become a conduit for resource sharing. In Massachusetts in particular, agencies have begun to use the council as a way to catalogue the varied sources of funding and programs that exist in that relatively resource-rich environment and to disseminate the information to participating agencies. For example, as an outcome of the E-T Choices program, the Welfare Department had funding available for employment training as well as expertise in providing this service to a disadvantaged population. As a partial result of linkages made through the YCC, $1.4 million in welfare funds was made available to OTEP for use in training at-risk youth.

In Oregon, through contacts made on the council, agencies serving juvenile offenders and pregnant teenagers were made aware of the availability of JTPA funding for their client populations.

In Oregon, demonstration activities have contributed to the formation of task forces where planners from a variety of agencies deal with key issues. These issues include welfare rules and regulations, downsizing of the state's juvenile detention facilities, and review of local JTPA 8% plans. While these activities represent an advance in "consultation" they do

not constitute "shared control" and do not appear to affect basic agency decision-making patterns.

In South Carolina there was little or no evidence of second-level collaboration; demonstration activities to date have not had real impact on the way agencies interact at the state level.

Increased Coordination Among Local Agencies

The smaller scale of local environments, combined with relatively larger resources and more directed effort, resulted in new coordinative links in all three states, many of them reaching Van Horne's third level, "shared control." Local agencies developed new relationships with other local agencies and with state agencies. They increased referrals of at-risk youth among agencies, jointly provided services and shared facilities and equipment. In some communities in South Carolina and Oregon, demonstration projects generated the first contacts among youth-serving agencies and introduced a new perspective on youth needs. Demonstration projects also promoted collaboration between schools and social service agencies, linked employment services to youth agencies, and reduced competition among agencies.

In Oregon in particular, the local projects show potential to become a base for developing a coordinated youth policy, with state-level collaboration built upon networks established through local projects.

While all local projects advanced collaboration, not all will continue beyond the demonstration. In Oregon, all first- and second-year demonstration projects have been extended through local funding commitments. Most notable is the decision that the Portland PIC will provide support to Outside/In to continue working with homeless and runaway youth, an effort initially funded with Department of Health and Human Services funds. Fewer than half of the projects in South Carolina will be sustained outside of the competitive 8% process. In Massachusetts, three of the four projects will be continued. These differences in the continuation of local projects reflect the differences in demonstration aims: only in Oregon are local projects viewed as the direct means to achieve demonstration goals.

The Oregon approach has resulted in both a greater degree of collaboration than is found in other states and good potential for future development of a coordinated youth policy. To a greater extent than in either South Carolina or Massachusetts, Oregon demonstration projects have evolved into a base for local networks of youth-serving agencies -- possibly an intermediate step to a statewide policy for youth.

The Oregon council's emphasis on shared responsibility among a variety of agencies for disadvantaged youth has facilitated

collaboration at the local level. Aided by an RFP process that mandates strong local support and evidence of sustainability in all funded projects, Oregon's local projects have been characterized by a high degree of coordination among youth-serving agencies; the development of formal agreements among agencies in areas such as referral, assessment and case management; and joint funding or reprogramming of funds.

From its local project experience, Oregon has also developed innovative financing techniques that promote future funding and expansion of youth programming. Through the state Education Department, Oregon has used existing funding sources, including Basic School Support and Vocational Education funds, to support local demonstration projects. Resource reallocation of this kind has great promise in three major goal areas:

- Improved financial support for effective programming. The diversion of regularly allocated funding offers the prospect of a continuing source of support for new youth programming beyond other sources such as JTPA. Such funding increases the stability of programs and the likelihood of expansion.

- Expansion of local service networks. Under several Oregon projects, Basic School Support funding is used to purchase alternative services for disadvantaged youth. Use of funding in this manner supports a variety of alternative service providers, encourages the expansion of a local service network and does much to integrate schools with the rest of the social service network. Schools -- given their mission, resources, staff and population -- are a logical place to invest a greater degree of responsibility for services to at-risk youth.

- Improved state-level collaboration. The existence of a substantial pool of Basic School Support funds available for at-risk youth has encouraged state human service agencies to seek support for their clients from the Department of Education. Hampered by budget restrictions, agencies to date have been reluctant to coordinate efforts around new services to disadvantaged youth. However, as one Oregon commissioner indicated, the availability of a relatively large and continuing resource pool strongly improves the likelihood of developing interagency linkages. Such linkages are fueled by the opportunity for agency commissioners to expand services and/or reduce costs with no diminution of agency budget or mandate. As evidence of this, the Oregon Department of Human Resources, in a rare alliance

with the Department of Education, is considering co-sponsorship of legislation to allow broader use of education funds for services to juvenile offenders.

Institutionalization of the Demonstration

The continuation of SEIY beyond the demonstration period depends upon its ability to do at least one of two things: integrate itself formally or informally into some established state-level body and/or exercise control over clearly designated resources. The most likely policy alternative is one or a combination of the following possibilities:

- Integration of the Youth Coordinating Council into the JTPA State Jobs Training Coordinating Council or some other body;
- Continuation of the council as a freestanding entity with additional state funding for local projects; or
- Continuation of the council with responsibilities other than direct support of local projects, for example, technical assistance to localities.

In Massachusetts, institutionalization is proceeding along the lines of the first policy option. The YCC has become formally invested as a subcommittee of the state SJTCC with review responsibility over spending JTPA 8% funds. Although the YCC does not in itself have final decision-making responsibility, it helps formulate funding priorities, drafts the RFP, makes recommendations for funding allocations, and monitors and reviews local projects. In addition, SJTCC by-laws establish that five members of the Youth Coordinating Council will also sit as members of the SJTCC itself. This integration with the SJTCC and identification with the 8% funding process provide the YCC with an agenda, a degree of influence and a continuing mechanism to promote collaboration. This integration, to date, has not hampered the council's independence or access to representatives from other state agencies.

With its reputation for providing information and technical expertise, the YCC has also become a potential recipient of outside funding. Currently, a major foundation is seriously considering it for a grant.

Continued council staffing seems assured through OTEP funding of a half-time coordinator position, though there has been some pressure for other agencies to provide funding.

Oregon has chosen the second option, to retain the council as a freestanding entity. The YCC has been institutionalized, at

least in the short term, through the allocation of an additional $800,000 for two years from state JTPA and $90,000 in vocational education funding to support local projects, the state coordinator and the council itself. In addition, in recognition of the council's close identification with local youth-serving projects, one SDA has asked the council to distribute $158,000 of its JTPA funds through a process analogous to that employed in the demonstration, and the SJTCC provided the council with another $545,000 in unspent 8% funds for disadvantaged youth. Thus, the council is increasingly viewed within the state as perhaps the best mechanism to initiate, monitor and evaluate youth programming, recognition that will likely maintain the council's local role -- and funding -- for the immediate future.

Unlike Massachusetts', Oregon's council has no formal linkage with the SJTCC. Although Youth Coordinating Council demonstrations have had some influence on SJTCC policies and several youth council members play a consulting role in 8% spending, there seems little prospect that the YCC will assume a more formal role in reviewing youth spending in the present administration.

In South Carolina, in contrast to the other two states, the demonstration's future is not secure. Although it currently appears that the youth coordinator position will be re-funded, the financing, placement, role and even future existence of the council is still in question. An effort to continue the council by amendment to the Employment Revitalization Act failed after protest by the state Department of Education, stemming largely from conflicts between the department's representatives and the state coordinator and council chair.

In short, the demonstration achieved many of its major goals, though often in a different fashion than had been originally formulated by the demonstration's planners. For example, the expectation of strong gubernatorial and legislative involvement was not met. Though that involvement would have been preferable, the experiences in Oregon and Massachusetts show that it was not necessary to have it to begin the process of change that was the demonstration's major goal. This finding may make the SEIY process even more useful to other states, than had gubernatorial and/or legislative support been found necessary.

FACTORS THAT AFFECTED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEMONSTRATION

Two related sets of factors limited achievement of demonstration goals. The first concerns the organization of state governments, and are generic in nature. The second set concerns circumstances specific to the demonstration states.

Generic Factors

Little Increase in State Capacity to Deal With At-Risk Youth

SEIY was established in a time of decreased federal responsibility for human service functions. The 1981 passage of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act shifted responsibility for policymaking and financial support for a number of social programs to the states, while the passage of the Job Training Partnership Act increased gubernatorial responsibility for a number of employment and training functions. This legislation provided new state responsibility and control of funding and services; it also seemed to present an opportunity for new discretion in organizing and delivering those services, particularly because significant budget reduction seemed to necessitate change.

To some extent this change has occurred, write Doyle and Hartle, because there has been "a fundamental shift in government power." Forced to respond to new incentives, states have raised new resources through tax increases, budget balancing and the improving economy. In one area in particular -- education -- reform has resulted in major changes. Spurred by national reports and public pressure for change, some states have greatly increased both the funding and priority attached to this issue, and the power of state education agencies vis-a-vis local school boards.

This same kind of change did not, however, translate to other human service areas. In most states the reduction in funding in the transition from CETA to JTPA was not replaced from any other source. Services of all kinds declined while at-risk youth in particular were hurt by new and more stringent restrictions on spending. Contrary to initial expectations, implementation of the new employment and training legislation -- focused on performance goals -- in many respects diminished rather than increased the discretion available to agencies. They were more exclusive in their target population and more restrictive in the services provided, and thus much less likely to extend themselves to provide comprehensive services which are most needed by at-risk youth.

Lack of Constituency for At-Risk Youth

The reason that change has occurred in the state role in education while remaining largely absent in other youth services is a matter of basic priorities. Governors were virtually forced to promote educational reform because it was an issue that drew support across broad and powerful constituencies. By contrast, the issue of at-risk youth is almost invisible. There is little constituency for this population: no one agency or institution has overall responsibility for the group, and there is no

pressure on political actors to develop new policies or programs around the issue. In none of the states participating in the demonstration was the at-risk problem a political priority for the governor or legislature, and most respondents interviewed saw little possibility that it would become so.

The lack of attention to or interest in at-risk youth problems was due both to competing priorities (such as economic development, balanced budgets, tax reform, crime, environmental concerns and welfare reform) and to the complex nature of the youth-at-risk issue. At-risk youth is not an issue that is readily adaptable as an organizing principle. The problem is complex: its causes are not always easily explained, and it encompasses a broad range of populations who must often compete with each other for public attention and resources. Solutions are not simple and may appear costly in the short-run: lower unemployment rates and significantly fewer contacts with the juvenile justice system may not occur until well beyond the tenure of the state's leadership.

The lack of compelling advocacy or a constituency that would make at-risk youth a priority on the state government agenda is perhaps best reflected by the need for a facilitating agency such as P/PV to stimulate attention to at-risk youth, and to encourage the participation of numerous agencies in a sustained collaborative process. Participants in all three states agree strongly that without the benefit of an outside catalyst, an effort such as SEIY would not have occurred.

It should be noted that during the course of the demonstration P/PV's ability to stimulate the direction taken by the states was substantially diminished. Two major factors contributed to this reduction in leverage. The first was the reduction in funding available for distribution to the participating states. Second, as participants gained experience they also required less outside technical assistance. As a result, they increasingly acted on their own inclinations to suit the administrative and political exigencies of their states.

Lack of Incentive for Agency Change

The SEIY design took as its point of departure the disorder and fragmentation of the existing youth-serving system. Despite its seemingly random organization and operation, however, this system is maintained by a network of incentives and supports that require significantly greater impetus to change than SEIY was able to provide. In operation, the demonstration was hampered by both existing patterns of service delivery and the tendency of agencies to resist collaboration.

As Joan Wills of the National Governor's Association has commented, agencies are not structured to program for specific group or individual needs but rather to deliver broad services or systems

-- income maintenance, education, employment and training, etc. These organizations reflect federal and state priorities and traditional categorical spending patterns. Balanced against the weight of this bureaucratic structural principle, SEIY goals promoting organization around provision of a spectrum of services to the individual appear unrealistic. Money and accountability, as Wills notes, have always flowed to the delivery of specific services and are likely to continue to do so.

Collaboration around at-risk youth requires that agencies transcend or at least modify their primary mission. Under the best of conditions -- including a well-defined problem, a limited number of players, a strong political mandate and significant new resources -- this is an unlikely event. Under the conditions accompanying the demonstration, the problems are considerably greater, and the goal is proportionately harder to achieve.

Observers in all three states as well as others (Hord, 1982) agree that agencies are likely to overcome restraints to collaboration only in response to certain powerful incentives (none of which were present in the participating states):

- Pressure from an "extraorganizational force" such as the governor or legislature,
- Strong dissatisfaction with the status quo, or
- The provision of extra resources with a requirement that specifically mandates collaboration.

Factors Specific to the Demonstration States

The implementation of SEIY has been constrained by each state's political climate, tradition and power structure. The three sites provided strikingly different environments for change. Significant differences in four areas -- decisionmaking, agency independence and gubernatorial role, resource availability and political environment -- have been major factors in the progress of the demonstration.

Decisionmaking

Policy change is initiated and effected in markedly different ways in the three states. In Massachusetts, a large industrialized state with a highly centralized bureaucracy, there is an established tradition of centralized decisionmaking. State government is relatively strong and local government relatively weak. Decisionmaking traditionally is initiated at the state level and then passed down to the localities.

By contrast, in South Carolina and Oregon, central state government is relatively weak. In Oregon, both the legislature and the

governor often take a relatively passive role; change stems from incremental local changes or concerted grass roots activity. In South Carolina, while the legislature plays a somewhat more directive role, decisions are often based upon local politics or locally derived initiatives. It should be noted that the recently passed Education Improvement Act (EIA), a major statewide undertaking initiated by the governor, was a notable exception to this pattern and may reflect a change in state decision-making patterns in education.

Agency Independence and Gubernatorial Role

The relationship and relative power of the state bureaucracy vis-a-vis the governor also differ greatly in participating states, and they have the potential to influence collaboration significantly.

In Massachusetts, the power of the centralized state government is concentrated in the governor's office. The governor directly appoints most agency heads and maintains a high degree of control over the operation of the bureaucracy. Agencies, largely lacking an independent power base, are highly competitive. The results are frequent conflicts among agencies over programs and resources. Collaboration among agencies is relatively unusual except where directed by the governor or otherwise mandated. Major initiatives stem from the governor's office and sometimes result in a redirection of agency resources, priorities and operating procedures.

In South Carolina, and to a somewhat lesser extent Oregon, the situation is almost reversed. The South Carolina governmental environment is characterized by a relatively weak governorship. Agencies are not controlled by the executive branch but rather by independent boards with members appointed by the legislature. The boards then appoint the agency commissioners.

The system produces agencies that are largely independent of gubernatorial control and indirectly responsive to the legislature. Thus, despite its progressive governor, the structure of the South Carolina government leans against organizational change. Agencies are separate and autonomous entities that tend to be characterized by inertia and unusually long employee tenure. Among YCC agencies, for example, the ESC director has been in his position for 14 years, longer than any other ESC director in the country, while at Vocational Rehabilitation, the council member has held the same job for eight years. Distribution of agency resources, mandate, programs and procedures tend to remain roughly constant over time, and apart from education initiatives there are few new programs or initiatives likely to alter the prevailing pattern. This combination of independence,

employee longevity and overall stability tends to promote a business-as-usual attitude in South Carolina, hampering coordinative efforts and other forms of organizational change.

In Oregon, while gubernatorial control is somewhat greater and agency independence somewhat diminished, roughly the same climate prevails: agencies are stable, major new initiatives are few and the allocation of resources, programs and responsibility is not greatly altered from year to year. Thus, the stimulus of local programs was a critical factor in the positive outcomes of the Oregon demonstration.

Resource Availability and Political Climate

The complementary influence of a tight budget and politically conservative leadership has resulted in a prevailing climate that provides little incentive for expansion of services in either Oregon or South Carolina. In Oregon, the governor, legislature and agency heads have made budgetary stability a major priority. Oregon has been suffering from declines in the timber industry, with rural unemployment rates high and tax revenues increasingly tight. There is little political support for initiatives for at-risk youth and little in the way of available resources with which these might be purchased. In South Carolina, a significant political and resource commitment to educational reform has had the effect of diminishing both financial and political support for other new initiatives. In the face of rising unemployment and a diminished budget base, agencies in South Carolina are primarily concerned with continuing existing services.

In Massachusetts, by contrast, unemployment is four percent. The state is in excellent financial shape, and the political tradition favors spending on social programs. Although there is some political support for increased fiscal conservatism, the Massachusetts environment is among the most conducive of all states to new policy and program directions. The state is also potentially fertile ground for a coordinative effort such as SEIY.

The differences in political environment created two distinct approaches to implementing the SEIY design. In South Carolina and Oregon, states where resources were scarce and agencies are struggling to maintain already restricted services, SEIY became a tool to generate interest and attention to at-risk youth. Planners in these states used the exemplary projects to increase funding and influence policymakers in the agencies and/or legislature. While the Youth Coordinating Council played an important role, the local projects served as the fulcrum for change.

In Massachusetts, where resources were plentiful and agencies were expanding programming efforts, different aspects of the SEIY design were emphasized. Rather than generate new services or

funding, SEIY was employed to redefine the use of existing resources and already established programs. Reflecting the greater size, complexity and wealth of the Massachusetts environment, the council could not focus on as large a portion of the youth-serving system as could councils in the other states. Where in South Carolina and Oregon the councils attempted to function in a directive and creative role to stimulate interest in youth in a quiescent environment, in Massachusetts the intent was informative and collaborative: a means to simplify an active and complex youth-serving system.

Shaped by the need to better use current resources, the Massachusetts council placed less emphasis on the local projects as instruments of change and more on the mechanism of the Youth Coordinating Council itself as a clearinghouse and forum. This distinction resulted in a different kind of effort in Massachusetts than in the other states, and it suggests that SEIY be considered not as a unitary design, but as a flexible intervention to be modified in response to environmental conditions.

Differences in Local Environments

A secondary influence affecting demonstration success, particularly in Oregon and South Carolina, was the extent and tradition of youth programming at the local level prior to SEIY. In these states, where the demonstration focus was on the local projects, strikingly different outcomes were observed.

Oregon's local projects were aided considerably by the size and relative urbanization of some project sites, as well as by the presence of active community-based organizations and PICs, and a cadre of personnel from these organizations and the schools with long experience in youth programming. Local staff used previous programming efforts and prior contacts at both the community and state levels to amplify the effect of demonstration projects. In South Carolina, the local service infrastructure was generally less developed because of the more rural nature of the state and the less extensive history of youth-serving efforts. Local projects were less able to build on pre-existing relationships or programming and also were handicapped by the paucity of other youth programmers with whom to establish complementary linkages.

REPLICATION AND OPERATIONAL LESSONS

1. The demonstration design can be adapted to individual state environments.

   While the demonstration sample is a small one -- not necessarily applicable to all other states -- the results do show a significant level of achievement in very different settings, with likely potential for replication.

Findings in Oregon --a state with limited resources and a relatively small service delivery system -- suggest that SEIY may be a means to generate new interest and funding for at-risk youth in a stable or contracting programing environment.

The contrasting experience in Massachusetts -- where the service delivery system was large, diffuse and expanding -- suggests that SEIY may also be effective as a means to simplify and coordinate policy initiatives in a disparate and complex environment.

2. A coordinated approach can enable participating agencies to broaden service delivery for at-risk youth within the framework of existing organizations, resources and goals.

For JTPA agencies, this approach can increase access to outside funding, help recruit a broader youth population, subsidize supportive services and provide additional expertise and experience in youth programming. In addition, joint programming with agencies serving a substantial number of at-risk youth can aid JTPA agencies in achieving federally mandated requirements for youth participants. In Oregon a comprehensive approach enabled the Portland JTPA agency to both gain additional educational funding for services already provided and to expand service to a new population including homeless and runaway youth. In Massachusetts, welfare funding provided to the state JTPA agency allowed for expansion of service.

For human resources or welfare agencies, it can provide access to additional funding and new services for AFDC recipients, youth in the juvenile justice system and other dependent client populations. These services include educational remediation, employment and vocational training services needed to promote employability and long-term self-sufficiency. For example, in South Carolina the creation of Youth Development Teams provided for a more intensive level of support to juvenile offenders.

For school systems, it can promote comprehensive services for youth while maintaining a primary emphasis on basic education. The addition of a range of supportive social services can potentially reduce the dropout rate through earlier and more effective intervention at little additional cost. The availability of such services within a school framework can benefit a variety of youngsters while reinforcing the schools' primary mission. In Oregon, a pilot program screens at-risk youth still in school for needed services.

Of course, barriers to achievement of these benefits exist in the form of differing agency performance standards and priorities. However, each of these agencies has as one of its goals service to at-risk youth, and it is this common aspect of different overall priorities that coordination helps fulfill.

3. Although the SEIY process can (and should) be modified to suit the needs and environments of individual states, certain key elements of that process seem central to its success.

   o The Youth Coordinating Council

     In practice the council is the major instrument promoting coordination, enabling disparate agencies to jointly focus attention and interest on broader needs of at-risk youth. The council can serve as a clearinghouse for information and resources relating to at-risk youth; it can also act as an ombudsman or advocate for youth initiatives within individual agencies, and to a lesser extent, in a broader policy arena. While the council has been shown effective in advancing a variety of collaborative efforts between agencies, it is unrealistic to expect it to assume a major role in the ongoing planning, budgeting and staffing of relevant agencies.

     Based on the experience in Oregon and Massachusetts, the Youth Coordinating Councils appear to be most effective when composed of policymaking staff below the highest levels. Mid-level staff are more familiar with agency operations, have contacts and credibility in many instances at both the administrative and line levels, have more time to meet, and are better able to focus on specific policy and service delivery issues. Agency heads were most useful when called in on specific issues.

   o Governor's Involvement

     While the SEIY approach cannot be expected to compel sustained gubernatorial support (unless current state priorities are altered dramatically), initial approval and development of a formal mandate appear necessary to give legitimacy to agency participation in a process of this kind.

   o An Outside Facilitating Agency

     The involvement of an outside facilitating agency may be required to gain initial involvement and support, and to provide legitimacy and duration to an SEIY effort. A facilitating agency has a neutral status convening

competing agencies, and can broker for change and compromise. It also assists in providing objective analysis and information regarding proven models of collaborative youth programming. Experiences in all three states indicate that the full range of SEIY activities could not have occurred without the intervention of an outside organization with expertise in these areas.

o Needs Assessment

The needs assessment provided demonstration states with a quick survey of basic needs and a starting point and definitional focus for council efforts. In addition, hearings and other means of the needs assessment process served as a vehicle for directing attention to at-risk youth.

However, it is not likely that youth councils can undertake a comprehensive or detailed analysis of service needs without substantially increased resources and alleviation of agency concerns about the collection and sharing of agency data.

o A Full-time Youth Coordinator

One of the most significant contributions to SEIY success was the youth coordinator, who functioned in both a designated role as facilitator of council meetings and local projects and in an ad hoc capacity as an advocate for youth and technical resource. Though this role requires some independence, it does not appear necessary for the coordinator to be entirely independent of the state apparatus, a designation that might detract from his/her ability to gain access to agencies or actors in the state system. Rather, the effectiveness of the coordinator role appears to derive primarily from three factors:

- Close identification with the Youth Coordinating Council;

- Considerable discretion over the organization of his or her working time, and over the setting of priorities among the coordinator's various tasks;

- Having the necessary interpersonal skills for working with various agencies and personalities. Previous experience with

the state system and some background in local programming are also very useful for a coordinator.

4. Financial Incentives.

The demonstration's financial packaging -- including the national funds, the required allocation of funds by the state for local programming, and the requisite local match -- was an important element of the demonstration's operations. The state funds created an initial, albeit modest, pool of resources which could be used for demonstrating innovative local approaches for serving at-risk youth. The best results were achieved when those funds were distributed through a targeted Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

The RFP is a concrete means of communicating state priorities and concerns. The RFP appeared most useful to promote such goals as a defined target group, joint funding, ability to sustain the program once state funding is no longer available, joint planning and extensive community involvement. In SEIY, this method assured close conformity with both YCC goals and community needs, promoted a diversity of program models, and increased the interest and attention generated by local projects.

5. Where schools play a strong role in local project efforts, the process seemed to generate greater local interest and greater potential for preventive programming.

Oregon's pilot use of schools as centers for screening, referral and service for at-risk youth was an innovation with strong potential for expanding services to a wide population. Since schools are a logical and effective locus for early contact with a disadvantaged population, their involvement promoted a much greater interest in preventive programming and support of local leaders in the private and public sectors.

The State Employment Initiatives for Youth demonstration was intended to encourage more coordinated use of different agencies' resources for at-risk youth on a regular and systemic basis. The approach was structural and procedural -- in contrast to the usual demonstration approach of testing a specific program model. Though the demonstration scope was modest, including only three states, the results have been favorable enough to warrant the conclusion that an approach similar to the SEIY model process may be of value in many states. The use of modest outside funds and a facilitating agency as catalysts were important in the SEIY demonstration, and will probably be required on a short-term basis for extension of the process to other states.

Given the national concern for at-risk youth and the increased authority and responsibility of states to deal with social concerns there is a need for a structured state-level process that promotes better coordination of agency resources and more comprehensive programming. This may be the strategy that has the best prospects for improving services for at-risk youth in the long-term.